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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 3, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHARLES J. FLEISCHMANN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

EXPAND AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, too many people in our country—the richest country in the history of the world—are hungry, and it is a sad reality. Hunger has many faces: children, seniors, veterans, the disabled. One group that experiences hunger and is often overlooked is working families.

Millions of people who work for a living don't earn enough to ensure that

their families have enough to eat. They don't earn enough to ensure that their kids have access to quality child care. For millions of working families, every single day is a struggle. We in this Chamber ought to do more to help.

In his State of the Union Address, I was pleased to see the President identify specific ways to support working families: tripling the child care tax credit; increasing the number of slots available and investing in high-quality, affordable child care programs. These are investments that are important to all families but especially working and poor families.

We know that the early years of a child's life are critical to shaping healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development. Ensuring that all of our young children have an opportunity to thrive in a safe, nurturing environment is one of the best economic investments that we can make. It is the right thing to do, and it pays huge dividends later on.

Families at all income levels know how expensive child care is today. In 2013, the cost of full-time care for an infant in a child care center was about \$10,000 per year, more than the cost of in-state college tuition in many States, and many of the best child care programs cost more than that.

For poor families, the cost of quality child care can be an untenable burden. For these families, it may mean being forced to choose between paying rent, getting medicine, or buying food.

No parent should find themselves in the difficult situation of having to drop their child off at a program that is unsafe or of poor quality just so they can get to their job. Parents shouldn't have to choose between safe child care and keeping their job to pay the bills. For poor families in particular, it is a daily struggle to balance everything and still make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, last week, the Census Bureau released figures that showed

that one in five children in this country received food stamps last year. Let me repeat that. One in five children relied on SNAP. That is 16 million children who relied on SNAP to keep them from going hungry last year, more than at the start of the Great Recession.

We know that our economy is improving slowly, but the gains aren't shared evenly among all Americans. Too many poor and working families are still struggling to make ends meet. We know that despite some of the false rhetoric, the majority of SNAP participants who are expected to work and are able to work, in fact, work.

Families with children have even higher rates of employment than other households on SNAP. More than 60 percent of families with children receiving SNAP have someone in the household working.

Mr. Speaker, these families have a working adult but still make so little that they qualify for SNAP. Without SNAP, these families would not be able to put enough nutritious food on the table for their children and for themselves.

Being poor is hard, and it is expensive. We should do everything we can to support working families. Expanding and investing in child care is an important step toward achieving that goal.

I urge the Republican leadership to support the President's initiatives to expand and improve access to high-quality, affordable child care programs. At the same time, I urge the Republican leadership—I plead with them—to refrain from cutting food and nutrition programs that are essential to a child's healthy development.

It is the right thing to do to support these families, to support food and nutrition programs, to support quality child care programs. It is the right thing to do for all American families. It is especially the right thing to do for our low-income families who have not

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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